



The new GT II Spreader attachment for belly dump trailers is shown here spreading gravel at about 10 mph around some grain bins.



Spreader replaces belly dump trailer's existing push block with an air-operated, 16-in. high steel blade just under 8 ft. wide.

Attachment Lets You “Spread And Level” With A Belly Dump Trailer

Tim Hudson, a local farmer and owner of TJM Trucking in rural Colfax, N. Dak., started hauling gravel to subsidize his farm operation. But he had a problem. He found himself having to pass up jobs because of the limited ability of his belly dump trailer.

Belly dump trailer operators have to get up to a speed of 25 to 30 mph and open their gates in order for the aggregate to spread out on the road surface. In situations such as small towns with gravel streets, farm yards, driveways, or winding roads, speed can not only be dangerous but sometimes impossible. Hudson needed a way to unload aggregate from a belly dump trailer at greatly reduced speeds.

So he invented an attachment for belly dump trailers that lets the operator level and spread aggregate evenly at slower, safer speeds. With the help of a local manufacturer,

it's now for sale.

The GT II Spreader replaces a belly dump trailer's existing push block with an air-operated, 16-in. high steel blade that's just under 8 ft. wide (dozers and payloaders use push blocks to push the truck and trailer if it ever gets stuck). A powerful air cylinder is used to adjust the blade angle.

The attachment comes with its own built-in push block and with an adapter plate that lets you attach the unit to any belly dump trailer equipped with a push block.

Tim enlisted the help of his son Jarrett and his brother Dan Hudson, who owns D.T. Hudson, LLC, a local retail, manufacturing, and distribution company in rural Lake Park, Minn. The Hudson's partnered with MidMach Mfg. in Jamestown, N. Dak., to build the attachment.

“The GT II Spreader lets you spread

aggregate at reduced speeds and still haul other products such as dirt, clay, and hot mix with your belly dump trailer, unlike a one-dimensional cross dump,” says Dan. “It's a completely new way of spreading material with a belly dump trailer. We've sold units locally and as far away as Texas. Our first prototype was hydraulic-operated, but we soon learned that not every truck has a hydraulic system. However, all trucks have air systems.”

According to Dan, the attachment eliminates an entire grading step. “After spreading gravel the road is immediately driveable, without the need for a box blade or road grader. You don't need to grade the road down before the truck comes back with another load, and other vehicles can drive right behind you without having to wait for a grader.

“Another benefit is that at a stop sign or corner you can spread gravel traveling as slow as 10 mph. It's impossible to travel that slow with a belly dump trailer and spread gravel effectively, because the gravel gets laid down too thick or it ends up in a dangerous ridge that's not only unsafe for motorists but could cause an operator to get stuck.”

A large hole on top of the attachment provides access to a heavy duty chain, which is used to lock the blade up for doing maintenance work.

The GT II Spreader is powder coated and can either be painted or unpainted. It sells for about \$7,000, including the adapter plate.

The company is looking for dealers.

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Do-It-Yourself Wood Stove Kit

After looking at the outdoor wood stoves on the market, Clarence Martin of Barnett, Mo., decided they were too expensive. So he built his own outdoor stove kit and now offers them for sale.

“These kits are for anyone who wants to weld their own stove together, but who doesn't want the headache of designing a stove and finding parts,” says Martin.

He came up with the idea several years ago when he decided to install an outdoor stove to heat his house. “All the stoves I found on the market were so expensive that it would take many years to recover their cost in fuel savings. The payback over just using propane wasn't that great,” says Martin. “My kit sells for only a fraction as much as a commercial wood stove.”

He uses his own stove to heat his entire house as well as a 1,300 sq. ft. greenhouse.

“My brother needed a stove to heat his 2,000 sq. ft. house as well as a 3,000 sq. ft. greenhouse, so I made another stove that's much larger. Both stoves worked well, and we made various improvements to them,” says Martin. “At first we recovered so much heat from the exhaust that the exhaust temperature was too cool. I could hold my hand on the single wall exhaust pipe even with a hot fire going. It caused too much soot to build up on the flu walls, so we made some modifications.”

The firebox is made from 1/4-in. thick steel and measures 25 in. wide by 32 in. high and 31 1/2 in. deep. “A large 24 by 22-in. door makes it easy to load the firebox, even with large chunks of wood,” says Martin. The door is insulated as well as air-cooled with incoming air.

A 350-gal. water reservoir surrounds the

firebox and is set up for 2 water circuits so that you can heat your house and a shop. The exhaust doesn't leave the firebox directly, allowing some of the exhaust heat to be recaptured.

The kit includes everything you need to build the stove including a stainless exhaust pipe, fan, electronic thermostat, and circulator pump. It also includes the external tin, which is available in a variety of colors. “All the kit parts are CNC cut with a laser and bent with a CNC brake, so fitting the parts together is a piece of cake,” says Martin.

The kit sells for \$2,399 plus S&H. The customer provides the piping and wire to go from the stove to your buildings, as well as fiberglass insulation and paint.

Martin says he can customize his stove kit any way you'd like. “I do all the design



“It's for anyone who wants to weld their own stove together to save money, but doesn't want the headache of designing a stove and finding parts,” says inventor Clarence Martin.

work with a CAD program and a local laser shop does the cutting, so customization isn't a problem,” he notes.

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Goat Milk “Better Than Milk Replacer”

If you have good dairy goats, you don't need to buy milk replacer for bottle lambs and calves, says Kiersten Sombke of Conde, S. Dak. Her milk replacer comes fresh from the goats she's milking, or out of the freezer jugs.

When she and her husband, Clint, purchased dairy goats for their sons to show at 4-H 15 years ago, they soon realized that they produced a lot more milk than needed for offspring. The Sombkes started feeding the extra goat milk to their bottle lambs and beef calves.

“The animals we fed it to just flourished, and it was a huge savings,” Sombke says.

In addition to the milk, she emphasizes the value of the goat's colostrum to feed to newborns that don't get it from their mothers.

“Dairy goats have 1 to 2 gal. of colostrum, and I can get 20 bags (to freeze) from each. I can grab a couple of bags out of the freezer, throw them in hot water and I have two feedings for lambs,” she says, noting she uses

larger amounts of colostrum for baby calves.

The Sombkes breed 4 to 5 of their 27 Nubian and Nigerian dwarf goats at a time to get a steady supply of milk to fill two freezers as well as have fresh milk on hand during calving and lambing.

Sombke is particular about cleanliness—clean buckets kept in the house, thoroughly washed udders, and keeping the milk in ice water or straining and freezing it immediately.

Cleaned plastic antifreeze containers filled about three-fourth's full work well for freezing milk.

“I let them thaw out, and goat's milk is naturally homogenized so it doesn't separate fats and cream and it stays smooth,” Sombke says.

Though their youngest son is in his last year of 4-H, the family plans to continue raising and showing goats.

“The babies (livestock) that are fed goat's milk look like they have been fed by their



Kiersten Sombke's milk replacer comes fresh from the goats she's milking, or out of freezer jugs.

mom,” she says. The 10 to 20 kids, lambs and calves the Sombkes bottle-feed for about 8 weeks each year don't have the potbelly-look common with bottle-fed animals, Sombke says.

Do your homework about breeds and breeders, she suggests, before purchasing

dairy goats.

“The convenience of having milk outweighs the work of having goats,” Sombke says.

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